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SUBJECT: KABILA'S NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS EMPHASIZES PROGRESS ON  
2006 CAMPAIGN PROMISES; SOME SEE ALLUSIONS TO CABINET  
RESHUFFLE

REF: 09 KINSHASA 1079

1. (SBU) Summary: In his annual televised New Year's address to the nation, President Kabila reiterated campaign themes that formed the basis of his 2006 campaign and his 2009 State of the Nation speech (reftel), and may also have hinted that a long expected cabinet reshuffle will be forthcoming. Kabila's self-proclaimed three-fold mandate is to establish peace throughout the country, achieve macro-economic stability, and improve local living conditions under his five-point development program dubbed the "Cinq Chantiers (five construction sites)." Kabila proclaimed that "uncertainty regarding sustainable peace in the East is at an end following military operations against foreign armed groups, the signing of the Goma peace accords, and normalization of relations with neighboring countries." In his remarks, Kabila noted that 2010 will mark the 50th anniversary of Congolese independence, "an anniversary that we are so proud to celebrate, which shows that, despite attempts to destabilize and balkanize the country," the DRC "remains united within its 1960 borders." He highlighted economic progress, with the DRC's accession to the heavily indebted poor country (HIPC) initiative and the "relinquishing of the foreign debt burden." He continued by reviewing progress in the areas of good governance, human rights, and improving basic infrastructure. His comments regarding "mobilizing the best leaders" were taken by some local analysts as hinting at a long anticipated cabinet reshuffle. End summary.

2. (U) Translated text of the speech follows:

As we celebrate the passage from one year to another, I think of each one of you and of all those who chose our country as their second motherland. To each of you, I wish with all my heart prosperity, health, and happiness. I also think of all the compatriots that the Almighty called to Him during the last twelve months. May their souls rest in peace.

The year we are ending has also been one of failure to conclude, for lack of political will, an historic accord on climate change, consequently reinforcing the worst worries for the future of humanity.

For us Congolese, 2009 has also been the year of the end of several uncertainties.

The end of uncertainties as to reaching the completion point of the heavily indebted poor country initiative and of relinquishing our country's foreign debt burden.

The end of uncertainties relating to the implementation of national reconstruction, the five priorities of the Republic

with the actual launch of important infrastructure projects in several places in the national territory.

The end of uncertainties as to the political willingness to fight corruption, misappropriation of funds, embezzling of public funds and social property, rape and other human rights violations. Therefore it is under good auspices that we are beginning the year, which bodes well for more than one reason. Particularly, because it is the year of an anniversary that is unlike others: that of 50 years of our country's independence. An anniversary that we are so proud to celebrate, that in spite of the plots to destabilize and balkanize it, the DRC remains united within its 1960 borders.

The Congolese nation is both an undeniable and unalterable reality.

The year 2010 will also be unique for the acceleration we seek to go forward with the establishment of modernization projects for the Congo and for structural and institutional reforms in all domains.

Thus, the courageous restructuring measures of our judicial system which have been taken during 2009 to improve the morality of political life, restore good governance, and effectively end impunity shall be pursued and strengthened. In this vein, elaborate instructions shall soon be given to the government, to heads of other clearly identified institutions, and our best leaders shall be mobilized. I already confirm that beyond continuous consolidation of peace, national cohesion and defense of territorial integrity, another challenge that will draw more of our

KINSHASA 00000001 002 OF 002

attention during the upcoming year is the improvement of social conditions of our population, notably in the areas of education and health, water and electricity, habitat and employment, and raising the citizen's purchasing power.

My dear compatriots, the prospects of a restored world economy, planned improvements in the business climate in the country, and additional resources expected to address foreign debt, are opportunities for growth, as well as incentives for private investment, which is the locomotive par excellence for the creation of riches and employment, with support and supervision of public powers. From now on, everything enables us to believe that a growth bearing progress is within our reach. Let us be determined to mobilize ourselves, as necessary. Therefore, once more, I call for more popular commitments to the national reconstruction work, for more responsibility in the exercise of political prerogatives, for compliance with the law by all and for personal and collective discipline. On my part, I shall be involved so that peace prevails and is strengthened, ceaselessly, all over the country, and that all Congolese have a chance of developing and being able to materialize their most noble dreams. I know that, in the face of any vital challenge, our population has always been capable of energetic action. Therefore, I am convinced that together, and with God's help, we will make 2010, a jubilee year of our national independence, a special year, a grand year for all, a year of memories, of introspection and action and a year of reconstitution of our collective memories, to lay the basis for the sustainable development of our country.

A Good and Happy New Year 2010!

End text of speech.  
GARVELINK